

## **National Network of Libraries of Medicine, Pacific Northwest Region Outreach Program Summary**

National Network of Libraries of Medicine Pacific Northwest Region (NN/LM PNR) outreach program areas include Outreach to Health Professionals, Consumer Health Information Services, and Collaborating with network Members and Community Organizations. These areas of emphasis are designated by the National Library of Medicine (NLM) and respond to its mission for the NN/LM:

The mission of the National Network of Libraries of Medicine is to advance the progress of medicine and improve the public health by providing all U.S. health professionals with equal access to biomedical information and improving the public's access to information to enable them to make informed decisions about their health.

Over the 2006-2011 contract, NN/LM PNR Outreach Programs will emphasize reaching the targeted populations identified by NLM. These include health professionals, especially public health workers, rural, inner city, and unaffiliated health care providers; community-based organizations, health advocacy and faith-based groups; K-12 teachers and staff; public, state, and academic librarians.

Priority areas for the 2006-2011 contract include continuing to encourage public libraries to promote NLM resources and offer health information programming; providing support to non-hospital based health professionals; assisting public health workers to achieve better access to biomedical information; build awareness of NLM and NN/LM resources and services region-wide; and facilitating collaborations and partnerships among agencies that have a health information and/or health literacy component to increase their awareness of and access to high quality electronic health information.

Below are specific objectives and activities proposed for Year 2 in NN/LM PNR outreach programs areas.

### ***Outreach to Health Professionals***

An important strategy for addressing information access and service gaps is to encourage hospital and academic librarians to enhance their services (and the profile of their institution) by extending their services to health professionals in neighboring communities, especially those who practice within the catchment area of the member hospital.

***Objective:*** *Develop focused outreach strategies for non-hospital health professionals (those with a type of practice not associated or affiliated with a hospital or medical center).*

In Year 2, the NN/LM PNR will support outreach to speech and language disorder professionals, based on an already identified need. Speech and language disorder professionals often do not have privileges at hospitals or clinics where quality health information services most often are available. With previous contract funding, Idaho State University (ISU) conducted an excellent needs assessment of speech and language professionals in Idaho. Results demonstrate a desire by this group of professionals for access and skill in using online resources for evidence-based decisions and practice.

ISU is developing a training curriculum about evidence-based practice that will be piloted and evaluated in southeastern Idaho during Year 1 and 2.

Meanwhile, staff at the RML will:

- work with the American Speech Hearing Language Association to identify opportunities to present at annual state or regional conferences;
- explore the possibility of sponsoring or conducting needs assessments in states other than Idaho, to better understand the information needs of this group throughout the region; and
- develop and post training curriculums and promote training awards to network members who can use the curriculum and funding to reach professionals in their community.

***Objective:*** *Develop, implement, and evaluate focused outreach strategies for selected groups of public health workers.*

It is important to maintain the momentum generated by the public health outreach initiative in the previous contract. NN/LM PNR has funded funded outreach activities by the Alaska Division of Public Health and Public Health—Seattle & King County (both network members), and projects directed by other network librarians have included public health workers. Resource libraries in Alaska, Idaho, and Oregon have conducted exhibits and training to both state health agencies and local health jurisdictions.

We will continue to staff or fund workshops and presentations by RML staff, Resource Libraries and network members at state and local public health agencies. We will continue to publicize the Training Manual via hlib-nw and at regional meetings. We will solicit training, planning and express outreach proposals from network members that focus on the public health workforce. And we will continue to support current outreach subcontracts that include public health partnerships.

Since the public health workforce is so diverse, we will also target specific audiences. In Year 1, as a result of exhibiting at a state public health meeting in Washington, Maryanne Blake conducted four presentations and an additional

exhibit for EMS, fire department workers, and other public health workers involved in accident prevention and emergency preparedness.

In Year 2, Ms. Blake will seek opportunities to exhibit and present at meetings of first responders in other states. We will also encourage network members to become more knowledgeable about the information needs of first responders in their communities, and ways medical and health librarians can respond.

***Objective:*** *Collaborate with regional centers funded by NIH or other agencies to reduce health disparities.*

The RML will continue to explore opportunities for partnerships and collaborations with regional centers that specifically address health disparities. In common with the NN/LM PNR, these centers share goals to improve access to care, to train minority or allied health professionals, and to enhance resources available to practitioners who work with communities with health disparities.

RML collaborations with “disparity centers” could benefit from their in-depth knowledge of both the status of health disparities in the region and contacts in affected communities.

In Year 1, RML staff met with the Center for Public Health and Nutrition at the University of Washington. As a result of that orientation, the Center submitted an excellent proposal for health information literacy related to nutrition in the public schools.

In Year 2, we will look for similar opportunities to approach other regional centers funded by NIH to provide an orientation about the services and programs of the NN/LM PNR.

***Objective:*** *Provide a continuum of outreach funding opportunities for network organizations to train or develop outreach services for unaffiliated health professionals, especially community-based and public health workforce.*

The RML will continue to offer a broad spectrum of outreach funding opportunities to encourage network member participation in reaching underserved health professionals.

Funding opportunities will include exhibit or training awards up to \$500 each to introduce services to new audiences; planning awards up to \$2000 each to encourage partnership development, to conduct community assessments, or to develop potential outreach project plans; and one-year express outreach awards up to \$12,000 each to conduct outreach projects based on assessed needs and well-laid plans.

## **Consumer Health Services**

To promote the use of quality health information - particularly in communities with pronounced health disparities – during the 2006-2011 contract, the RML will build awareness of NLM and NN/LM resources and services region-wide; increase capacity and skills of health information intermediaries; and facilitate collaborations and partnerships among network members for broader community reach.

**Objective:** *Train multiple library types as well as health information intermediaries in the effective use of electronic health information resources and in evaluating health information on the web.*

In the previous contract period, curriculum materials were developed for training public library staff. The most-requested classes are "Prescription for Success" and "From Snake Oil to Penicillin." The first is an overview of web-based health information resources, with emphasis on MedlinePlus and the second is a class about how to evaluate health information on the Internet. These topics are certainly transferable to various groups including all library types, health educators, and health professionals. The original curriculum materials are all available on the NTCC's Educational Clearinghouse database. NN/LM PNR also links to them from the regional web site so that others may download and use them to train their own staff or their clientele. We will continue to use them with new audiences and to update the content as appropriate.

For example, Gail Kouame, Consumer Health Coordinator, adopted the course called "From Snake Oil to Penicillin" to web-based format using Moodle as the platform. Classes are led by Ms. Kouame and are asynchronous in delivery. This class will be offered twice in Y2.

Also in Year 2, Ms. Kouame and Roy Sahali, Community Resources Coordinator, will develop another web-based tutorial titled: "Web-based Information Resources to Support Your Health Ministry." The course will be based on a successful workshop by the same name that Ms. Kouame offered in Y1 at the Parish Nurse Health Center in Helena, MT. The course provides an overview of consumers' information-seeking behaviors. It discusses why parish nurses and health ministers should be aware of health web sites. Participants will be introduced to a suite of internet resources they can consult when working with their patients and clients including MedlinePlus, DIRLINE, as well as other well-regarded consumer health web sites. Information about evaluating health-related internet resources will also be included.

**Objective:** *Increase awareness by public libraries and community organizations about NLM and NN/LM resources.*

Public libraries are logical places for promotion of NLM and NN/LM resources. The RML will continue to staff or fund exhibits at various regional and national

library conferences in order to continue to build awareness by public librarians of NLM databases and other credible information resources.

To encourage support for public libraries in serving their communities health information needs, the RML will distribute promotional materials about health libraries in the network willing to receive referrals from public libraries.

***Objective:*** *Develop programs to promote MedlinePlus and other NLM resources to health professionals as a resource for them and their patients.*

The InfoRx program that was implemented in the 2001-2006 contract will continue to serve as a vehicle for promoting MedlinePlus to health professionals for use by their patients. The prescription pads for information have been the most popular give-away at exhibits for health professionals.

In Year 1, Great Falls Public Library was funded with an express outreach award to partner with community-based health organizations, the Great Falls Clinic, and the local public health jurisdiction to help citizens of Cascade County make more informed health care decisions. The project focuses on health literacy improvement and promotes the Information RX program materials.

***Objective:*** *Support and encourage health information services in tribal communities.*

The Montana State University in Bozeman hosts a Tribal College Librarians Institute each year. Tribal college librarians come from all areas of the United States for the training offered at this institute. Many tribal college libraries also serve as public libraries for community members and need of access to and information about health information relevant to their tribal members.

Gail Kouame co-taught a workshop with Siobhan Champ-Blackwell during the week long Tribal College Institute in June 2007. The curriculum provided an orientation to the NN/LM, and its emphasis on the importance of community partnerships for approaches to improving health literacy.

***Objective:*** *Promote health information literacy at annual meetings of social service professionals. Get invited to offer training workshops at regional and national annual conferences to discuss health information literacy and value of NLM resources.*

Gail Kouame and Karen Hajarian at NLM convened a panel presentation at the 2007 Health Ministries conference in San Antonio, TX in June, 2007. The panel highlighted projects where faith communities have successfully partnered with medical libraries. It also covered NLM and NN/LM's progress in working with faith communities. They will also staff an exhibit at the conference.

Rev. Mary Diggs-Hobson is an invited panelist and will highlight projects in which faith communities and medical librarians have successfully partnered to improve health information literacy in their respective communities. Rev. Diggs-Hobson represents the African Americans Reach and Teach Health Ministries (AARTH), a small, Seattle-based non-profit organization.

***Objective: Promote MedlinePlus Go Local***

In Y1, a Go Local award was awarded to Voices of Hope for a state-wide Montana Go Local project. This is the first Go Local project in Region 6.

In Y2, we will encourage applications for another one-time Go Local award and provide support and consultation to those who are developing Go Local proposals.

***Objective: Provide a continuum of outreach funding opportunities for public libraries or other organizations serving minority, senior or low-income populations.***

The RML will continue to offer a broad spectrum of outreach funding opportunities to encourage network member participation in reaching their communities.

Fund training and exhibit awards up to \$500 each for training of public library and community organization staff about health information services and programs

Fund planning awards up to \$2000 each to encourage partnership development, to conduct community assessments, and to develop potential outreach project plans.

Fund express outreach awards up to \$12,000 each to support health-related information outreach projects. Emphasize importance of community partnerships in funding goals.

***Collaborating with network members and other organizations***

To raise awareness and use of quality online health resources, NN/LM PNR would like to support community-based organizations (CBOs) that serve populations that NLM wants to target. The NN/LM PNR can do this by bringing community-based groups into the network and applying approaches and strategies that facilitate effective relationships and outreach with these new partners.

The groups we want to work with are presumably disparate organizations with different strengths, goals and agendas. Some CBOs may not be familiar

with online health resources and may have given little thought to ways the communities they serve can benefit from these kinds of resources. We can help them promote health information as part of the social, economic, faith-based, and environmental interventions they already perform at the local level.

**Objective:** *Seek opportunities to learn about community organizations/agencies that target minorities, seniors, and low income populations.*

Identify community contacts that RML staff and network libraries have at community organizations that reach low-income, senior and minority populations

Add identified agencies to list of Potential Members database

Also, collect contact names for the list of Potential Members at exhibit opportunities that reach CBOs working with low-income, senior and minority populations

**Objective:** *Increase the RML staffs' understanding of current network members' assets, needs, and interests in community outreach*

Develop an organizational profile tool (i.e. asset mapping tool) to be conducted with network organizations interested in community outreach. Pilot the organizational profile with Resource Libraries

From network survey results, identify network libraries interested in community outreach (and partnering with community organizations)

**Objective:** *Increase awareness by community-based organizations about NLM and the NN/LM PNR*

Develop or find opportunities to enhance programs with NLM and NN/LM products and services, at agencies that serve multi-cultural, multilingual ethnic minorities, seniors, and low-income populations,

For example, promote agencies' credibility via marketing materials that link their services to credible health information resources from NLM and NN/LM PNR (e.g. Montana State Library campaign and AARTH use of logo for their materials)

Require funded projects to place links to and the logos of relevant NLM products on their web site

**Objective:** *Develop and disseminate materials from NN/LM PNR that highlight network members, linking their credibility to NLM's reputation*

Develop promotional pieces that highlight network members

Link the NN/LM PNR newsletter/blog to the potential network member area of the web site

Exhibit or present at regional, state and local meetings and CE opportunities of potential network member communities

**Objective:** *Build skills and capacities of network members to provide health information outreach at a local level*

Fund short-term community assessment/planning awards up to \$2000 each to assist network members to identify key partners and mutually agreed on outcomes and strategies. For example, in Year 1, the Kittitas Valley Community Hospital received a planning award to conduct a community assessment of the health information needs of Upper Kittitas County and potential community partners.

Offer module/workshop by OERC about "Getting Started with CBO Outreach"

Promote and refer to the "Libraries and Community Partners" web site

**Objective:** *Offer training to staff of agencies around the 5-state region that serve multi-cultural, multilingual ethnic minorities, seniors, and low-income populations*

Offer training awards (up to \$500) to network member librarians and other network members who teach staff at agencies serving identified groups

Offer orientation and train-the-trainer sessions to CBO affiliate members

Promote descriptions of training opportunities available on the NN/LM PNR web site and multiple announcement and discussion lists